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'Examining Religion' through Generations of Jain Audiences: The Circulation of the *Dharmaparīkṣā*

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Abstract: Indian literary traditions, both religious and non-religious, have dealt with literature in a fluid way, repeating and reusing narrative motifs, stories and characters over and over again. In recognition of this, the current paper will focus on one particular textual tradition within Jainism of works titled *Dharmaparīkṣā* and will trace its circulation. This didactic narrative, designed to convince a Jain audience of the correctness of Jainism over other traditions, was first composed in the tenth century in Apabhraṃśa and is best known in its eleventh-century Sanskrit version by the Digambara author Amitagati. Tracing it from a tenth-century context into modernity, across both classical and vernacular languages, will demonstrate the popularity of this narrative genre within Jain circles. The paper will focus on the materiality of manuscripts, looking at language and form, place of preservation, affiliation of the authors and/or scribe, and patronage. Next to highlighting a previously underestimated category of texts, such a historical overview of a particular literary circulation will prove illuminating on broader levels: it will show networks of transmission within the Jain community, illustrate different types of mediation of one literary tradition, and overall, enrich our knowledge of Jain literary culture.

Keywords: Jainism; manuscripts; circulation; satire; narrative

The Jain *Dharmaparīkṣā* narrative, which stands out because of its explicit satirical character towards non-Jain traditions, has been popular from at least the tenth century until the nineteenth century. With a focus on the materiality of literary production, this paper seeks to establish the historical popularity of the *Dharmaparīkṣā*, as well as to strengthen the already-existing research on material literary culture of the Jains. In this regard, I argue that an examination of distribution patterns enables us to judge the popularity of a text. Further, with its method which looks not only at distribution patterns but also (preliminary) at other material indications of the text's sociohistorical context (such as sect, caste, etc.), the paper aims to provide an example of how to assess in detail the practical use, relevance, and meaning of a text or textual tradition within South Asian literary history.

Within the field of Jain Studies, it is common knowledge that Jains have played an important role in the production and circulation of literary translations and reproductions (see e.g., Johnson 1993; Cort 1995; Wujastyk 2014). The huge amount of manuscripts in hundreds of libraries, for example, testify to a flourishing religious literary economy that engaged many individuals of different interests and stimulated, and was also stimulated by, a thriving intellectual community. Although within Jain Studies the enormous potential of what we can learn about Jainism and wider literary circulatory practices in South Asia is recognized, much of this potential is still to be exploited.

In fact, scholars of South Asia have recently renewed their attention to these issues, posing new research questions relating to the actors, practices, and spaces of literary production and circulation, the circuits of literary circulation, or the literary modes and languages of production and reproduction in India (see e.g., Colas and Gerschheimer 2009; Orsini and Sheikh 2014; de Bruijn and Busch 2014; Pauwels 2015; Orsini and Schofield 2015). Questions pertaining to the role of the Jains in that literary circulation, including their specificities and relation to wider Indian literary culture, remain all the more undisclosed.[1]

This paper wants to add to this path of research within a Jain literary context by viewing literary circulation from the perspective of one single textual tradition, by which I refer to different translations and retellings of one story produced over several centuries. It will attempt at depicting the spread of one frame story that goes by the title of *Dharmaparīkṣā* and will focus on the material aspects of its circulation.

In order to do this, I will first frame the main analysis by introducing the context of Jain manuscript culture, and identifying what is meant by the *Dharmaparīkṣā* textual tradition. Next, I will detail the multiple versions of *Dharmaparīkṣā* that exist in multiple languages, as such proving the *Dharmaparīkṣā* textual tradition to be a perfect illustration of how, in Indian literary history, circulation was ubiquitous and not hampered by linguistic boundaries, as well as a confirmation of the claim by de Bruijn and Busch (2014) that even within a religious community which has sometimes been identified with a particular language (e.g., Prakrit in Jainism), texts and genres were disseminated across sociolinguistic communities (p. 4). Moving on to the actual materiality of the *Dharmaparīkṣā's* circulation, the paper will examine the number of manuscripts and map their locations in order to show how the *Dharmaparīkṣā* circulated across regional boundaries, suggesting a widespread fondness for this narrative. Thirdly, the paper will focus on the material aspects of some exemplary manuscripts. This will provide a first indication of the actors who used the *Dharmaparīkṣā* texts (namely both lay people and monks). Additionally, an examination of the colophons of the exemplary manuscripts discloses the use of the text, the networks between religious actors and the places that are connected through the *Dharmaparīkṣā*. The colophons further display how the *Dharmaparīkṣā* circulated across sectarian boundaries, as well as across time, as its manuscripts kept being produced until at least the end of the nineteenth century.

Wrapping up this detailed analysis, the conclusions of this paper will convince that the extent of a piece of literature cannot be fully assessed without probing its materiality.

1. Introducing Jain Manuscript Culture

As Pollock (2006) has stressed, the invention, diffusion, and conquest of manuscript culture, by which literary culture materialized, had a 'historic' impact on further literary developments in India (p. 77). An important impetus came from the medieval period onwards, when the Jains, as well as the Buddhists, started to establish libraries integrated in temple complexes in order to preserve their highly valued written tradition (Johnson 1993, p. 189). These Jain temple libraries, in contrast to Buddhist libraries that disappeared as Buddhism in India declined, remain active until today, making sure that the Jain manuscript collections now are considered among the richest collections in India (Wujastyk 2014, p. 10).

The manuscript libraries, called *jñāna bhaṇḍāras*, which Cort (1995) pointedly translates as 'knowledge warehouses' in his study of the manuscript libraries in Pāṭaṇ (Gujarat),[2] were organizations that in a way mediated the relations between Jain laity and monks. While the libraries mostly served the interests of the mendicants, as it preserved the texts for the monks to use, it was the laity who was

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[1] Most studies about Jain literary culture and literary circulation have been case-based and focused on aspects relating to its materialized form, namely manuscript culture (see e.g., Cort 1995; Johnson 1993; Balbir 2006; Kragh 2013; Balbir 2014, 2017). John Cort's study of the practice of translation among seventeenth-century Digambara Jains in Agra (Cort 2015) opens up knowledge about Jain literary culture from the perspective of translation, a perspective that Ramanujan (1991) has pointed out to be ineludible for Indian literary culture.

[2] I have chosen to transcribe Sanskrit terms fully according to the IAST (International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration) and to transcribe names (of places, people, etc.) and titles as they would be pronounced in their current use, i.e., omitting unpronounced vocals (e.g., Pāṭaṇ instead of Pāṭaṇa, and Kāslivāl instead of Kāsalivāla).

responsible for establishing and managing the libraries where manuscripts could be kept. As such, the names of Jain kings and rich merchants are known for the libraries they have built (e.g., king Kumārapāla in Pāṭaṇ; see Cort 1991, p. 78). The management of a *bhaṇḍāra* was in the hands of prominent lay members of the Jain congregation, or of a specialized mendicant who permanently resided in the monastery (a *yati*, for Śvetāmbara communities, or a *bhaṭṭāraka* in *Digambara* Jainism).[3]

Similarly, whereas Jain manuscripts would originally have been written down by mendicants who would compose works or copy texts during the monsoon season (Kāslivāl 1967, p. 5), extant manuscripts, mostly dating at earliest from the tenth and eleventh century, show how actually the lay community had the greatest hand in manuscript production. The laity was expected to arrange the copying of the manuscripts for monks to use (Cort 1995, p. 78). Many manuscript colophons speak of a prominent lay person who patronized the copy and of a lay scribe, who sometimes copied independently or was hired by a patron. As such, Detige (2018) notes that in the Digambara tradition many manuscripts were copied by so-called *paṇḍitas*¸ intellectual lay pupils of a *bhaṭṭāraka* who were often trained as ritual specialists. This use of the term is not to be confused with the Śvetāmbara title *paṇḍita*, synonymous to *paṅnyās*, where it refers to a rank of mendicants (Cort 1991, p. 664), or with the contemporary use of the term for well-educated lay intellectuals (Wiley 2009, p. 164; Flügel 2006, p. 341). In recent times, the focus in the organization of the Jain *bhaṇḍāras* has shifted towards the preservation of manuscripts. Increasingly more temple libraries have undertaken the cataloguing of their collection and sometimes have established a research center with the library. This brought with it the establishment of libraries such as Kobā Tīrth near Ahmedabad that comprises collections from several *bhaṇḍāras* in one temple-based library.

The lively history of the living Jain manuscript tradition shows why research concerning the materiality of a text, by which I do not only mean paper and ink but also the places, people, and relations associated with that material text, is important. It is within this context that I will examine the manuscript circulation of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* tradition, which is delineated in the following section.

2. Identifying the *Dharmaparīkṣā*

The *Dharmaparīkṣā*, which translates as 'Examination of Religion,'[4] is a narrative text that tries to examine and argue why the Jain tradition is 'true' (*samyañc*) and why other traditions, more precisely the dominant Brahmanical tradition, are not.[5] More specifically, the text makes its argument within a frame structure using stories that refer to and satirically criticize Hindu Purāṇic and epic episodes. As such, the text should be understood within the tradition of *Jain Purāṇas* and Jain versions of the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*.[6] Other than this, the *Dharmaparīkṣā* is often compared to the *Dhūrtākhyāna* ('A Tale of Rogues') because the works have a similar frame structure, common narrative motifs, and because both texts are satirical towards religion.[7] Being a narrative text with a satirical undertone to

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[3] Cort (1995) describes how, due to misuse of power by some *yatis*, a reform movement arose around the turn of the twentieth century, instigated by the lay congregation to take over the organization of the *bhaṇḍāras*, so that now the institution of the *yati* has largely disappeared (Cort 1995, pp. 80–81). In the Digambara tradition, only in the South of India some *bhaṇḍāras* are still under the control of a *bhaṭṭāraka* (e.g., the Śrī Jaina Maṭha in Mūḍabidri), as the *bhaṭṭāraka* institution has disappeared from the North of India. (see Balcerowicz 2015 and works by Detige).

[4] Many things can be said about the complexities in translating the word *dharma* that I do not want to discuss here. I chose to translate it as 'religion' because the text is about weighing one religious tradition against others, in the sense that Jain authors understand their religion, namely as that which holds truth.

[5] Note that the Buddhist tradition is also attacked, especially in Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā* (see De Jonckheere forthcoming).

[6] The Jain versions of the pan-Indian purāṇic and epic narratives are clearly distinct from the better-known Hindu versions (where Vālmīki's and Vyāsa's renderings are considered as authoritative), and often explicitly criticize these Hindu versions (see e.g., De Clercq and Vekemans 2019). The critiques in the *Dharmaparīkṣā* point out similar 'mistakes' of the Hindu versions as the Jain *purāṇas* and epics.

[7] The *Dhūrtākhyāna* is a satirical frame story, best known in the Prakrit version by Haribhadra, about five rogues who play a game of telling incredible stories, which they argue to be credible by referring to purāṇic stories.
For works referring to the Dharmaparīkṣā and the Dhūrtākhyāna together, see for example Osier (2005); Upadhye (1944); Krümpelmann (2000, p. 16); Warder (1992, p. 253).

criticize other religious traditions, the *Dharmaparīkṣā* was most likely meant to be heard or read by a Jain lay audience, with the purpose of directing them back on the correct Jain path and affirm the Jain path as the one true tradition.

Of the *Dharmaparīkṣā*, there exist several versions in several languages, written from at least the tenth century onwards by Digambara Jain authors. In a later period, some versions by Śvetāmbaras were also composed.

The main narrative of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* tells the story of two Vidyādharas, humans with extraordinary powers (*vidyās*) such as the ability to fly, in search of the truth.[8] One of them, Manovega, is a devoted Jain. He is concerned about his friend, the other Vidyādhara called Pavanavega, who has strayed from the right religious path and who is especially drawn towards the Brahmanical religion. In search of help to get his friend back on 'the right track,' Manovega goes to Ujjayinī where he meets a Jain monk Jinamati. Hearing Manovega's problem, Jinamati advises him to take his friend to Pāṭalīputra, a city dominated by Brahmins, portrayed as experts of the Hindu scriptures. There, Manovega engages in discussions with the Brahmins, each initiated by the narration of an incredible story he has invented about his life. From this point onwards, the narrative frame takes on a repetitive structure in which, for every few substories, the two Vidyādharas take on a different disguise before entering the city of Pāṭalīputra. In this way, every time they enter Pāṭalīputra they play a different character to instigate the curiosity of the Brahmins living there. Noticing the two peculiar newcomers, the Brahmins approach them and ask them who they are, upon which Manovega answers with an incredible story from his life. When the Brahmins do not believe him, Manovega justifies his story by referring to parallel episodes from the Hindu epics and *Purāṇas*. In this way, he proves the inconsistency of Purāṇic Hinduism. After every such discussion the Vidyādharas go outside of the city. There, Manovega explains to Pavanavega didactic passages from the Jain doctrine. In the end, Pavanavega is converted and accepts the vow of a Jain layman.

From this brief overview of the content of the *Dharmaparīkṣā*, it should be clear that this relatively understudied narrative is interesting to examine from the angle of literary circulation, since it tells us something about the way Jains saw their own place in society. More precisely, it informs us of a specific attitude of the Jains, throughout time and space, towards other traditions and their religious texts, namely an attitude of counteractive appropriation by means of satire. This attitude is not to be understood as remaining the same, but rather as repetitively revaluated because of the recurring need to refocus and reposition Jainism within historically changing socioreligious contexts of ideological battle.[9] The next section will provide an overview of these textual revaluations of the *Dharmaparīkṣā*.

3. Many Dharmaparīkṣās

As I have mentioned above, several texts have been written that tell this same story. With three exceptions, all of them are called *Dharmaparīkṣā*. The names of the exceptions are *Manovegakathā*, *Manovegapavanavegakathānak* (attested respectively in the *Jaina Granthāvalī* and the Dela Upāśraya Bhaṇḍār: (Velankar 1944, p. 301)) and *Manovegapavanavegacaupāī* (kept in Jaisalmer:

An extensive study on the *Dhūrtākhyāna* including an edition (in Latin script) and German translation of Haribhadra's Dhuttakkhāṇa was done by Krümpelmann (2000). Osier and Balbir (2004) published a translation of Haribhadra's Dhuttakkhāṇa into French with an elaborate introduction.

Osier (2005) argues that the satirical aspect of both texts makes them stand out because this is very uncommon and is considered improper for refuting other religions (p. 33). Lee Siegel, however, in his work Laughing Matters (1987), shows that there was a strong tradition of humour and satire within Indian literature, including what he calls religious satire (pp. 187–244).

[8] The summary of the frame story given here is based on the version by Amitagati.

[9] I regard the *Dharmaparīkṣā* much in the same way as Dundas (2008) interprets the *Kathākośaprakaraṇa* by Jineśvara Sūri. Whereas the latter text would have "played a polemical role in an ideological battle within the Jain Community over the nature of orthodox Śvetāmbara Jainism and its place within socioreligious context of western India of its time, the *Dharmaparīkṣā* as a textual tradition would have played a role from the tenth century for Digambara Jainism and later also for Śvetāmbar as Jainism".

Jambūvijaya et al. 2000, p. 93). Most versions have never been studied, but we know of the existence of multiple works titled *Dharmaparīkṣā* because their titles can be retrieved in many manuscript catalogues. By researching these catalogues and secondary sources, I could compile a list of 28 authors who have written a *Dharmaparīkṣā*. These are: Amitagati, Daśaratha Nigantva, Devasena, Devavijaya, Hariṣeṇa, Jinadāsa, Jinamaṇḍana, Lakṣmaṇaprasāda Tivari, Mānavijaya, Manohara Lāla, Manohara Dāsa, Manovega, Nayavijaya, Padmasāgara, Pannalāla Caudhari, Pārśvakīrti, Rāmacandra, Sahasoma Ji, Saubhāgyasāgara, Sumatikīrti, Vṛttavilāsa, Yaśovijaya, Devendrakīrti, Nayasena, Śrutakīrti, Vādisingh, and Viśālakīrti.[10]

However, Indian literary works sometimes share the same title while not sharing the same content.[11] Indeed, after scanning the texts of which I have been able to collect a manuscript, it appears that some of these authors do not tell the story of Manovega and Pavanavega. The *Dharmaparīkṣā* by Yaśovijaya, for example, is a philosophical treatise and the texts by Jinamandana and Mānavijaya/Devavijaya[12] seem to tell a different narrative.

The following table (Table 1) shows the authors, with date and language, of *Dharmaparīkṣās* that are confirmed to contain the story of Manovega and Pavanavega, and are thus a retelling or translation of an older text.

Table 1. Authors of a *Dharmaparīkṣā*.

Author	Time of Composition	Language	Affiliation	Place
Hariṣena	1044 vs. (988 CE)[13]	Apabhraṃśa	Digambara	Citrakuṭa/Acalapura[14]
Amitagati	1070 vs. (1014 CE)[15]	Sanskrit	Digambara	Mālava[16]
Vṛttavilāsa	ca. 1360 CE[17]	Kannada	Digambara	Karnāṭaka[18]
Śrutakīrti	ca. 1552 vs. (1495 CE)	Apabhraṃśa	Digambara	Jerahaṭ[19]
Saubhāgyasāgara	1571 vs. (1515 CE)[20]	Sanskrit	Śvetāmbara	
Sumatikīrti	1625 vs. (1568/1569 CE)[21]	Braj Bhāṣā	Digambara	Haṃsoṭ[22]
Padmasāgara (Pārśvakīrti)[24]	1645 vs. (1588/1589 CE)[23]	Sanskrit (Sanskrit)	Śvetāmbara	Velākūlapura
Rāmacandra	17th century[25]	Sanskrit	Digambara	
Manohardās	1705 vs. (1649 CE)[26]	Braj Bhāṣā	Digambara	Dhāmpur[27]
Daśaratha Nigotiā	1718 vs. (1661 CE)	Rājasthāni[28]		
Nemavijaya	1821 vs. (1764/1765 CE)	Gujarati	Śvetāmbara[29]	

[10] The references used are the catalogues listed in my bibliography, as well as the introductions to the editions of the texts by Hariṣeṇa (Bhāskar 1990) and Amitagati (Śāstrī 1998); Upadhye (1942); Johrāpurkar (1958) and Caudharī (1998).

[11] The *Dharmasaṃgraha*, for example, is both a famous work ascribed to the Buddhist author Nāgārjuna that glosses Buddhist technical terms, and a work by the Jain author Mānavijaya describing the duties of Jain laity and ascetics (Winternitz Maurice 1933, pp. 347, 594).

[12] Hariṣeṇa (Bhāskar 1990, p. iii) and the catalogue of Kobā Tīrth refer to a *Dharmaparīkṣā* text by Mānavijaya and Devavijaya separately, and I have collected both manuscripts tagged Devavijaya and Mānavijaya. However, these manuscripts contain the same text and are, in my reading, composed by Mānavijaya. This is why I refer here to one text using two names separated by a dash.

This chronological table testifies to the popularity of the text throughout several centuries, as it was told or written and retold or rewritten from the tenth century until at least the seventeenth century. The oldest version was written in Apabhramśa by Hariṣeṇa, who himself claims that he has based his *Dharmaparīkṣā* on a composition in *gāthās* by Jayarāma.[30] A manuscript of this text has not yet been found and Hariṣeṇa's account is the only one mention of it.[31] The most widespread version

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[29] Nemavijaya, *Dharmaparīkṣā Rās*, Khaṇḍa IX Ḍhāla 7, v. 8:

saṃvat āḍhāra ekavīsamāṃ vaiśāka sudda paḷa| tithi pāṃcama guru vāsare gāyā guṇa meṃ saḷ ka°||.

[28] See (Kāslivāl 1967, p. 311).

[27] See (Kāslivāl 1950, prastāvnā, p. 20).

[26] Schubring (1944, pp. 433–34) gives "*saṃvat* 1705 [1649]" as date of composition. This accords with verse ([19]83) of the manuscript he describes (Ms. or. fol. 2309): *satareṃ seṃ panca uttareṃ pausa dasami guru-vāra saṃpūraṇa bhayau grantha iha saj-jana hitakāra||* However, I could not find this sentence in the manuscripts I have collected. Instead, manuscripts 616/1875–76 of BORI, 1433/1886–92 of BORI, G71 of the Jaina Sidhānta Bhavana in Arrah, and the manuscript from the Svarn Mandir in Gwalior (obtained through Tillo Detige) give the following sentence (or a variant thereof): *vikrama-rājā kau bhayai sāta adhika suhajāra baraṣa tabai yaha sahasa-kṛta| bhaī kathā śubha sāra||.*

[25] (Bhāskar 1990, p. iii). This dating is presumptive as the text itself does not seem to render any date.

[24] Reference to Pārśvakīrti as the author of a *Dharmaparīkṣā* is found in (Bhāskar 1990, p. iii; Velankar 1944, p. 190; Śāstrī 1998). The edition of Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā* (Śāstrī 1998) includes a *Dharmaparīkṣākathā* that is said to be composed by Pārśvakīrti (the header reads *pārśvakīrtiviracitā*). However, in my opinion the text included in the edition is the text by Rāmacandra. Firstly, the text itself reads: *iti śrīrāmacandreṇa muninā guṇaśālinā| khyātā dharmaparīkṣā sā kṛtākṛtariyaṃ tataḥ||* (Śāstrī 1998, p. 378). "In this way the virtuous muni Śrī Rāmacandra has composed the famous Dharmaparīkṣā, then this composition [was made] (*kṛtir* for *kṛtar*)." The sentence referring to Pārśvakīrti comes only after the seemingly closing sentence of the text: *iti dharmaparīkṣākathā samāptāḥ||cha|| śubhaṃ bhavatu lekhākapāṭhakayoḥ| graṃ 200| śrīsarasvatyaiḥ namaḥ| śrīdeśīyagaṇāgragaṇyasakalasaṃyamaguṇāmbhodhi-śrīpārśvakīrtimunirājasya dharmaparīkṣā granthasya śubhamastu| kalyāṇamastu|* (Śāstrī 1998, p. 378). Moreover, manuscripts of the *Dharmaparīkṣākathā* ascribed to Rāmacandra (BORI 1270 of 1891–95; BORI 1268 of 1886–92; Hemacandra Jain Jñāṇ Bhaṇḍāra Pāṭaṇ 1762) contain the same text and do not include the last sentence referring to Pārśvakīrti, who would be the muni in whose possession the manuscript (*grantha*) was (so for whom it was copied).

[23] Padmasāgara, *Dharmaparīkṣā*, v. 1483:

tadrājye vijayinyananyamatayaḥ śrīvācakāgresarā| dyotante bhuvi dharmmasāgaramahopādhyāyaśuddhā dhiyā| teṣāṃ śiṣyakaṇena pañcayugaṣaṭcandrāṅkite vatsare (1645)| velākūlapure sthitena racito grantho'yamānandataḥ ||1483||.

[22] See (Johrāpurkar 1958, p. 198).

[21] Because the Vikrama Saṃvat calendar and the Gregorian calendar do not start at the same time, it is impossible to translate the date into an exact corresponding date of the Gregorian calendar when only the year of composition is given. This issue is even more complex from the fact that there are two variants of the Vikrama Saṃvat calendar (*pūrṇimānta* and *amānta*) with different monthly schemes and thus starting at different times. It is for that reason that I give two possible dates of the Gregorian calendar, when I do not refer to a secondary source.

[20] See (Caudharī 1998, p. 275).

[19] Biographical information about the author Śrutakīrti is taken from the *praśasti* of the *Harivaṁśapurāṇa* by the same author. Jerahaṭ should probably be located near Damoh in Madhya Pradesh (See the discussion in Jain 2002, pp. 86–91).

[18] Rao writes that, according to Devacandra's *Rājāvalli Katte*, Vṛttavilāsa lived during the reign of the Hoysāla king Ballala (1982, p. 4).

[17] Upadhye and Rice ascribe Vṛttavilāsa to circa 1160 CE (Upadhye 1942, p. 592; Rice 1921, p. 37). Venkatasubbiah argues that he lived around 1345 CE (Venkatasubbiah 1931, p. 520). Rao follows Venkatasubbiah and writes that Vṛttavilāsa must have lived circa 1360 CE (1982, p. 3). I follow the argument of Rao and Venkatasubbiah.

[16] In his *Subhāṣitaratnasaṃdoha*, Amitagati writes that he wrote during the reign of Rāja Muñja, ruler of the Paramāra in the Mālava region (1954, p. 43). In the Pañcasaṃgraha, supposedly the same Amitagati accounts that he wrote the work in Masūtikāpur (nowadays Masīd Bilaudā) (1954, p. 70).

[15] Amitagati, *Dharmaparīkṣā, praśasti* v.20:

saṃvatsarāṇāṃ vigate sahasre sasaptatau vikramapārthivasya| idaṃ niṣiddhānyamataṃ samāptaṃ jinendradharm āmṛtayuktaśāstram ||20||

[14] Hariṣeṇa came from Citrakuṭa but composed the text in Acalapura (*cittaüḍu* and *acalaüraha* in the text: Sandhi XI, Kaḍavaka 26).

[30] jā jaya rāmeṃ āsi viraïya gāhapabaṃdhi | sāhammi dhammaparikkha sāpaddhaḍiya baṃdhi| (Kāslivāl 1950, p. 109). The edition (Bhāskar 1990) renders *jā jagarāmeṃ āsi viraïya gāha-pavaṃdhiṃ| sāhami dhammaparikkha sā paddhaḍiyāvaṃdhiṃ||* Manuscripts 478, 483, and 491 from the Jaina Vidyā Saṃsthān, and manuscript 617 (1875–1876) from BORI all render *jayarāma* instead of *jagarāma*. As such, Kāslivāl's rendering seems more correct.

[31] From his comparison of Hariṣeṇa's and Amitagati's text, Upadhye (1942) hypothesizes that a Prakrit text, possibly by Jayarāma, served as the independent basis for both versions.

was written in Sanskrit by Amitagati, whose composition seems to have served as the base for later versions (Manohardās explicitly refers to Amitagati's text as his source). By the early modern period (ca. 1500–1800), *Dharmaparīkṣā* texts were being composed in vernacular literary languages, as is indicated by the texts of Sumatīkirti and Manohardās in Braj, Nemavijaya in Gujarati, and Daśaratha Nigotiā in Rājasthāni. This shows, on the one hand, the rise in literary importance of these languages among the Jains, and on the other hand, the importance of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* to be translated in vernacular languages. In the same period, we see that Sanskrit continues to be used as a literary language (in the versions of Saubhāgyasāgara, Padmasāgara, and Rāmacandra).

Through its translations and retellings, the story of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* has been handed down over a certain period of time. For that reason, I speak of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* as a textual tradition. The tradition circulated not only through the words of several authors, but also through the production of multiple manuscripts. This material culture of manuscripts, that as handmade pieces all differ from each other, will now be the focus of the rest of this paper.

4. Many Dharmaparīkṣā Copies

A first indicator of the material circulation of a text or textual tradition would be the number of manuscripts that were produced of it. Today of course, the exact number of manuscripts that were ever produced is impossible to ascertain. One can only resort to the extant manuscripts, especially those that have been recorded in catalogues. Through the method of consulting all the catalogues I could retrieve,[32] I have found 231 manuscripts titled *Dharmaparīkṣā*. Of those manuscripts, twenty-one manuscripts are of a different type of text, as they contain the texts composed by Yaśovijaya, Jinamaṇḍana, and Mānavijaya/Devavijaya. Another forty-three manuscripts are unclear regarding their contents. This leaves 170 manuscripts which belong to the *Dharmaparīkṣā*-tradition that is defined by the frame story about Manovega and Pavanavega.

The distribution of the manuscripts according to ascribed authors shows a relatively greater importance of Amitagati's text. With a presence of seventy-nine manuscripts (i.e., forty-six percent of the one hundred seventy manuscripts), Amitagati's composition is confirmed to be the most popular version in material terms. The second most occurring author is Manohardās, with forty-six manuscripts.

Another indicator to estimate the importance and popularity of a textual tradition is its geographical spread. Geographical information is found most broadly in the manuscript catalogues (in addition to more local geographical references in the manuscripts themselves). In order to visualize the spread of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* tradition, I have chosen to map the places where the manuscripts are stored today using three types of catalogues. The first type are catalogues of community-based manuscript libraries (the *bhaṇḍāras*) that, in addition to a list of manuscripts kept in the library, often contain extra details such as date of composition and state of the manuscript.[33] The second type of catalogues list the collection of institute-based libraries (e.g., Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute: BORI). These catalogues contain similar details and are often more easily available through a wider spread publication. The last type are the "catalogues of catalogues" (e.g., Catalogus Catalogorum) that exist as general registers, reports (e.g., Peterson Reports) or databases (e.g., NAMAMI) of manuscripts referring to the places where manuscripts are kept.

Figure 1 visualizes the geographical spread of the extant manuscripts, pinning each location for which there is a catalogue entry of a *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscript.[34]

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[32] All catalogues I have consulted are listed in the bibliography of this article.

[33] These include, e.g., The *Handwritten list of the manuscripts at the Pārśvanātha Digambara Jaina Prācīna Jinālaya in Idar* (retrieved in photographs), but also Kāslivāl's *Rājasthān ke Jain śāstra bhaṇḍāroṃ kī grantha sūcī* in four volumes.

[34] I have only included the manuscripts of *Dharmaparīkṣā* texts of which I know for certain they contain the story of Manovega and Pavanavega, which is the 'textual tradition' I am studying.

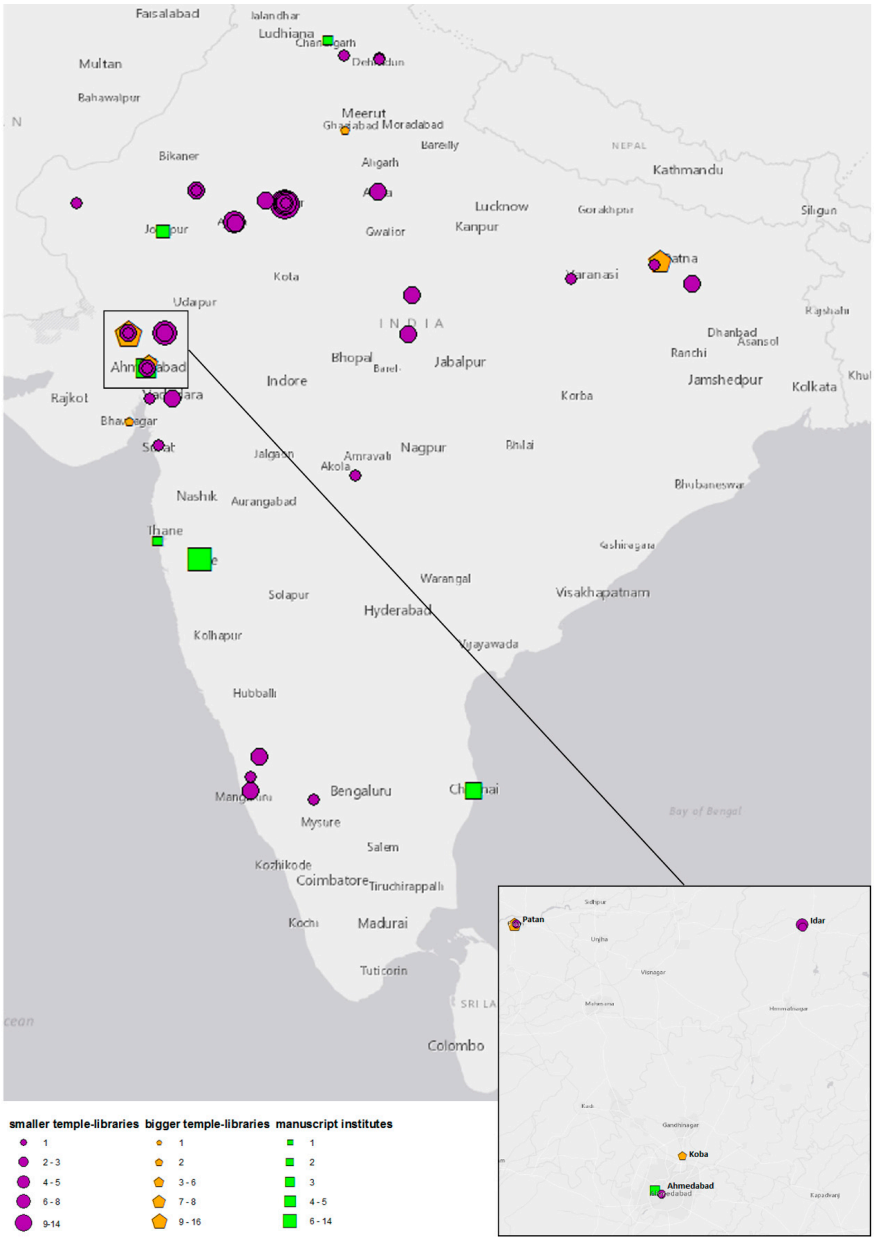

Figure 1. Places of preservation of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* tradition.

The points on the map represent the places where *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscripts are now housed and do not show where the manuscripts were produced or where they have been kept throughout the centuries. Moreover, as some catalogues or registers date from decades back, the points also do not guarantee that one would find a *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscript at the pinpointed places today still. What the points on the map do represent are the places where, at a certain point in time, a manuscript of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* was kept. This indicates that, in that specific place, the manuscript was deemed valuable to be kept either for practical reasons (it was used), or for reasons of preservation (the text was considered 'worthy' to be preserved). The marks on the map are differentiated by color and form to indicate the type of library in which the manuscript has been attested. A purple dot indicates a smaller library traditionally attached to a Jain temple (*jñāna bhaṇḍāra*). An orange pentagon refers to the bigger Jain temple-libraries that have established themselves as quasi-research institutes and contain

multiple manuscript collections, some of which were originally kept in *bhaṇḍāras* at other places.[35] Green squares represent the manuscript institutes (e.g., BORI) that only house manuscripts collected from other collections (including private collections and traditional *bhaṇḍāras*) and were established solely for the purpose of research. The development of these institutes has nevertheless been crucial for manuscript preservation and progress in the study of literature.

The purple dots, representing the smaller libraries, are of most interest because they are most likely to contain manuscripts obtained through traditional networks and preserved for traditional reasons. The locations of the bigger Jain *bhaṇḍāras* (orange pentagons) are also elucidating with regard to geographical spread of the textual tradition, because the collections these organizations have gathered into one library originate from places with which the Jain organization has or had social connections.[36]

Most of the locations pinpointed on the map keep more than one manuscript of *Dharmaparīkṣā* and often by the same author. As such, the map does not represent the total number of manuscripts. The Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān in Jaipur, which includes the former famous collection of the Āmer Śāstra Bhaṇḍār, for example, holds, according to the catalogues, eight manuscripts of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* by Amitagati, two by Hariṣeṇa, and three by Manohardās. However, it must be noted that when I visited in January 2017, I was shown three manuscripts by Hariṣeṇa, three by Amitagati and none by Manohardās, indicating a discrepancy between the published catalogues and the present-day situation. This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that some manuscripts got lost in the archives, might have suffered from decay due to the fragile character of manuscripts, might have been on loan, or simply because catalogues are not necessarily correct. The Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān is an example of the bigger libraries marked in orange. Over the years, these *bhaṇḍāras* have become large 'temple-based research institutes' devoted to the preservation of manuscripts coming from their own original collection, and also manuscripts collected from smaller *bhaṇḍāras*. The best example of such a library is the Hemacandra Jñān Bhaṇḍār in Pāṭaṇ, as it gathered a number of temple-based manuscript collections and is managed by a trust directed by Jain lay people. Other collecting manuscript libraries are attached to research institutes (like BORI) and University libraries (marked with green squares). The size of the marks (dots, pentagons, and squares) on the map are graduated according to the number of *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscripts each library holds (the bigger the mark, the more manuscripts kept in that library, with a maximum of fourteen in one place). Notice that Jaipur has a cluster of libraries where many *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscripts are kept, the most important libraries being the *Jain Baḍā Terahpanthī Maṇḍir* (see Kāslivāl 1962, 1954) and the *Āmer Śāstra Bhaṇḍār* at the *Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān* (see Kāslivāl 1950).

Figure 1 clearly shows that the *Dharmaparīkṣā* textual tradition as a whole was widely spread across the subcontinent. In addition, Figures 2 and 3 below visualize the material spread of the texts by Amitagati and Manohardās, which are the two dominant versions in numerical terms. Both versions seem to have been well circulated. Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā,* next to having a numerical dominance, also has a distributional dominance. Manuscripts of his composition are found in both North and South India in smaller *bhaṇḍāras*, and his version is also preserved in more eastern parts of India in the Jain Siddhānt Bhavan in Arrah, a research institute of Jain affiliation. Manohardās' *Dharmaparīkṣā* has been well spread across northern India. The most southern mark on the map points to BORI in Pune which holds manuscripts originally collected from other places. The relatively strong presence of the text by Manohardās in North India is presumably related to the language of the text, which is Braj Bhāṣā. Premodern Hindi (of which Braj can be seen as a contributing language) was used as a

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[35] Cort (1995) has described how the collection of the Hemacandra Jñān Bhaṇḍār in Pāṭaṇ was consolidated from several collections coming from places including Ahmedabad, Jaisalmer, Kacch, and Panjab because of impetuses like political choices and connections between laymen of different *saṅghas*. As such, the Hemacandra Jñān Bhaṇḍār is indicated by an orange pentagon.

[36] It has to be noted that these bigger *bhaṇḍāras* are not all completely transparent as to which policies they follow in collecting manuscripts (e.g., questions have been raised among scholars of Jain studies about which practices Kobā Tīrth in Gujarat is applying).

literary medium from Gujarat to Bengal and from northern Hindustan to the Deccan.[37] Manohardās' text was thus part of this wide and flourishing literary culture due to its language, but presumably its aesthetical value also had an influence.

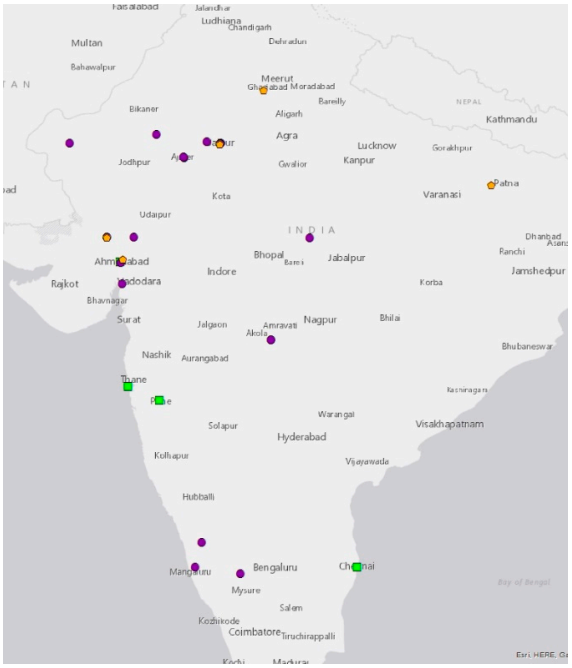

Figure 2. Places of preservation of Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā*.

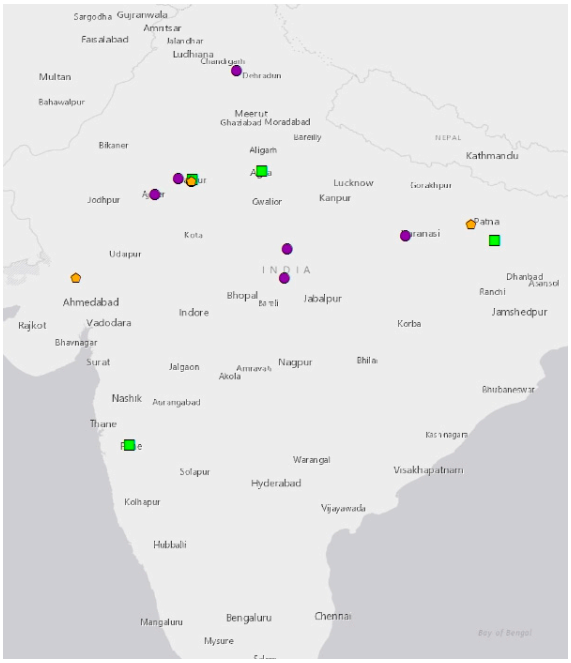

Figure 3. Places of preservation of Manohardās' *Dharmaparīkṣā*.

The three maps together illustrate a relatively strong presence of manuscripts of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* in Western India, which is known to have a prominent Jain community. Interestingly, there seems to be no necessary division between Śvetāmbara and Digambara repositories with regards to the

[37] For a discussion on Braj literature, I refer to the Introduction of (Busch 2011).

Dharmaparīkṣā, as manuscripts of Digambara versions such as that by Amitagati are well present in Śvetāmbara libraries (e.g., Hemacandra Jñān Bhaṇḍār in Pāṭaṇ). The textual tradition also made its way to the South where, next to manuscripts of Vṛttavilāsa's Kannada version, Amitagati's text is also preserved. The *Dharmaparīkṣā* today is kept in both traditional Jain libraries as well as research institutes without affiliation (e.g., Government Oriental Manuscript Library in Madras).

The *Dharmaparīkṣā* texts seem to have been well circulated and therefore liked by the Jain community who decided to copy a manuscript or have it copied. Although the number of manuscripts I have found is not overwhelming, it is still a significant number. Moreover, this number is definitely not a final count, as many libraries have not been catalogued and as many manuscripts are still kept in private collections.

5. A Few *Dharmaparīkṣā* Manuscripts

After looking at the body of manuscripts of *Dharmaparīkṣā* from a broad perspective, the next section will examine some manuscripts in detail, highlighting several aspects that are informative of Jain manuscript culture and disclose in-depth knowledge about the material culture of the *Dharmaparīkṣā*. These aspects include the material form and visible properties of the manuscripts, as well as an analysis of the scribal colophons. I have consulted these manuscripts at the Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān in Jaipur, the *jñāna bhaṇḍāra* at Kobā Tīrth, the Lālbhāī Dalpatbhāī Institute of Indology in Ahmedabad, the Hemacandra Jñān Bhaṇḍār in Pāṭaṇ, and the BORI in Puṇe.[38] One manuscript I have received through Tillo Detige from the Jain Svarn Mandir in Gwalior, and six manuscripts I was able to consult through the idjo.org website, which stores digitized manuscripts from the Jain Siddhānt Bhavan in Arrah. In total, I have consulted thirty-two manuscripts of *Dharmaparīkṣā* texts.[39]

5.1. Material Form and Looks

All of the manuscripts I have collected were written on paper. This is related to the fact that the manuscripts I could access come from northern India, where most manuscripts are on paper. By contrast, in his edition of the 'southern' *Dharmaparīkṣā* by Vṛttavilāsa (in Kannada), Rao attests that he used seven manuscripts in preparing the edition, six of which are palm leaf (Rao 1982, pp. 28–32). Some of the manuscripts I collected were in relatively bad shape, although most were still complete and readable. This suggests that the collections I consulted have been well preserved and taken care of by the community.

Between the manuscripts there is quite a variety in the attractiveness of the manuscript because of the style of writing, the decorations and ink colors, and the size of the manuscript.

The script of each of the manuscripts is Devanāgarī (although in different variants), which accords to the general fact that this is "the script used for the bulk of the north Indian manuscripts of the last thousand years" (Wujastyk 2014, p. 7).

A 'typical' *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscript is represented in Figure 4. The manuscript is rectangular and written in black ink with the verse numbers marked in a reddish overlay. The writing style is pretty readable, and there is an open space in the middle of the folio, witness of a time at which the binding of a manuscript was done through a hole in the middle. This is how many Jain manuscripts and classical Indian manuscripts in general look, although this particular example has somewhat more text on one folio than most.

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[38] I thank these organizations for allowing me to consult the manuscripts and for providing copies of them.

[39] Eleven of the manuscripts contained Amitagati's text, ten were of Manohardās' text, four contained Hariṣeṇa's text, three manuscripts were of Rāmacandra's text, two contained Padmasāgara's text, one was of Saubhāgyasāgara's text and one of Sumatikīrti's text.

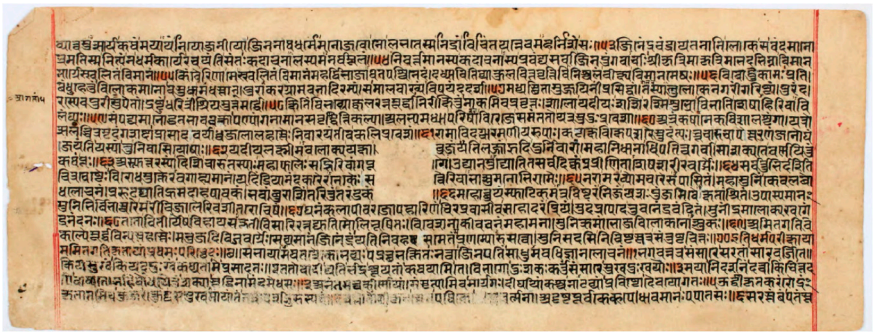

Figure 4. *Dharmaparīkṣā* by Amitagati, Kobā Tīrth n. 12092[40].

Overall, none of the collected *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscripts seem to stand out in form (which would have been the case, for example, if they had been written on a medium other than paper (for North Indian manuscripts) or would have included illustrations).

One manuscript, containing the *Dharmaparikkhā* by Hariṣeṇa, seems to be more precious (see Figure 5). It is decorated with a *citrapṛṣṭhikā*, which is an illustrated opening (or closing) page (Balbir 2017, p. 62). The illustration is like most *citrapṛṣṭhikās* in red, a color viewed as auspicious (Balbir 2017, p. 62). The illustration is not the most complex, but it does add to the beauty of the manuscript. Its beauty is even more enhanced by the decorative red dots in the margins of the following folios and the decorations around the page numbers. These red ink decorations are not continued throughout the manuscript, which is a convention I have seen in several manuscripts. On the opening page of the same manuscript, we also find the name of 'Muni Śrī Ratnanaṃdi.' Possibly this name refers to the muni the manuscript was given to. The decorations might then be seen as a way of making the gift more reverential. However, as there is no scribal colophon (*puṣpikā*) to this manuscript, this interpretation is hypothetical.

Figure 5. *Dhammaparikkhā* by Hariṣeṇa, Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān n. 478.[41]

Another interesting-looking manuscript of the *Dharmaparīkṣā*, this one by Manohardās from the Arrah Jain Siddhānt Bhavan (see Figure 6), has a completely different form. It is in 'portrait' format and has a less-polished handwriting, while still differentiating text and verse meter or number by using both black and red ink. Flicking through the different folios of the manuscript, it appears that the manuscript has not been written down by only one person. We can discern at least two different handwritings. Further, the manuscript is broken off at several points and only the first chapter of the text has been preserved. Overall, this manuscript looks somewhat messy and is not as well preserved as the other manuscripts I have collected.

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[40] I express my gratitude towards the Śrī Kailāsasāgarsūri Jñānmaṇḍir for providing this digitized manuscript.
[41] Own picture.

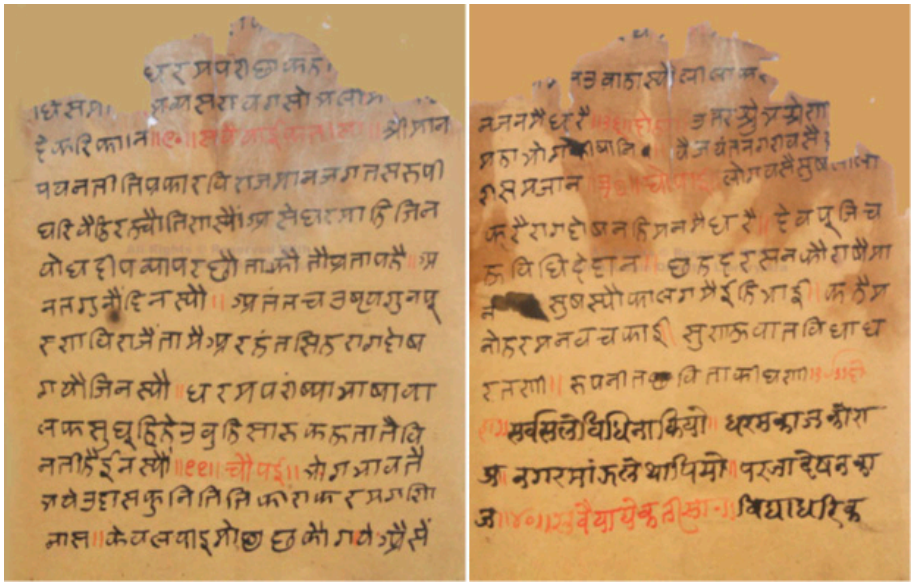

Figure 6. *Dharmaparīkṣā* by Manohardās, Jain Siddhānt Bhavan n. Da-021-28.[42]

This manuscript is a *guṭakā* manuscript, a sort of notebook into which people copied texts of various lengths and subjects for their personal study or recitation.[43] Its very existence is the sure sign that there are other similar manuscripts of *Dharmaparīkṣā* texts. This type of materiality shows how the *Dharmaparīkṣā* text, in this case the text by Manohardās, played a direct role in the religious practice of Jain laity. It also gives a sense of the practical use of texts written by laymen (as Manohardās was) for lay communities. As it contains two different handwritings, it suggests the text changed hands between members of the community, which is not uncommon for *guṭakā* manuscripts. The different handwritings testify to the multiple interests in the material text and in the text by Manohardās, that became a space of living religious practice shaped by the community.

5.2. Manuscript Colophons

Jain manuscripts have the overall reputation of often providing informative colophons (Balbir 2017, p. 64).[44] Some of the manuscripts I have consulted indeed include a scribal colophon, called a *puṣpikā*, but not all manuscripts have this and they are not equally informative. In its most elaborate form, the scribal colophon would give a date (year, month, day) of copying, a place, a ruler at that place, the copyist, and a patron and his family (in that order). Some colophons also refer to the lineage of *bhaṭṭārakas* and *ācāryas* (ascetic ranks within Digambara Jainism) of the *gaccha* or *gaṇa* of the person (often a *muni*) for whom the manuscript was meant, and sometimes even a price of the manuscript.

Faithful to this reputation, the colophons of the manuscripts I have collected (twenty of the thirty-two manuscripts include a *puṣpikā* or colophon) give information about the practices and social networks related to *Dharmaparīksā* material texts by including these aspects that will now be discussed point by point, with references to examples of *puṣpikās*.

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42 Accessed through *idjo.org*.

43 Tyler Williams' dissertation on the history of writing in Hindi (Williams 2014) is very insightful on the characteristics of *guṭakā* manuscripts and what their materiality could tell about the social context and use of the texts they contain.

44 In the Indian context, there are two types of colophons, namely, the *praśasti*, including information about the author, and the *puṣpikā* or scribal colophon, containing information about the specific manuscript copy. As the paper talks about the material circulation of manuscripts, the discussion will only pertain to scribal colophons.

5.2.1. Date of Copying

The detailed colophons will first enable us to assess the circulation of the different versions of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* in time. Manuscript colophons usually render dates in the following way, exemplified here by the colophon of manuscript 617/1875–76 of BORI that contains the *Dhammaparikkhā* by Hariṣeṇa: 'In VS 1595 (=1539 CE)[45] on Tuesday the fifth day of the dark fortnight of the Pauṣadha month, during the fifteenth lunar constellation [. . .]'.[46] In fact, the addition of the lunar constellation in this colophon is not uncommon in Indian manuscripts, but does not appear in any of the other consulted manuscripts. This manuscript is the oldest manuscript I have consulted.

In contrast, of the consulted manuscripts, the one copied the latest dates from VS 1909 (=1852 CE).[47] It contains the text by Manohardās and is kept in Gwalior. Most dated manuscripts contain Amitagati's text and these date from VS 1599, VS 1607, VS 1624, VS 1666, VS 1681, VS 1698, VS 1766, VS 1776, VS 1870.

It should be noted that the dates represented by the collected manuscripts furnish only one restricted perspective on the history of the transmission of *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscripts because they come from specific libraries that have their own specific history, as they were established at a specific time, knew their heydays in specific periods, or might have experienced certain difficulties at other moments.

Including also the information retrieved from manuscript catalogues, then the oldest manuscript, containing Amitagati's version, dates from VS 1537 (=1480/81 CE) and is kept in Ajmer (Śrī Di. Jain Paṃcāyatī Maṃdira, p. 140, n. 1672.142), while the latest manuscript dates from VS 1960, containing Manohardās' text and kept in Gwalior (Singh 2012, p. 231, n. 353).[48] Another relatively late manuscript of Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā* is dated VS 1939, housed in Jaipur (Kāslivāl 1962, p. 353, n. 3650). This indicates that Amitagati's text continued to be copied and remained circulating until very recent times.

5.2.2. Places

Secondly, concerning the assessment of the spatial spread of our textual tradition, manuscript colophons can refer to two types of places. The place most mentioned is the place where the manuscript was copied. Sometimes a manuscript refers also (or only) to the place where the patron comes from. These geographical references have great potential as they would disclose a network of locations that is both religious and economic, linking temples, lay followers, and professional scribes. Unfortunately, as these places were often very small localities that nowadays do not exist anymore or have changed their names, it is often very hard to geographically locate them. and would require more historical topographical studies.

An example of such an 'unknown' place is found in manuscript 1076/1884–87 at BORI of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* by Amitagati: 'In VS 1624 on Sunday the eleventh day of the Jeṣṭavadi in the place

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[45] As explained in footnote 22, it is difficult to give an exact corresponding year of the Gregorian calendar of the Vikrama Saṃvat date. Here, I have followed the *amānta* variant of the calendar which was mostly used in Gujarat where the manuscript was copied (*āmojavāda*).

[46] ***Saṃvat 1595 varṣe pauṣadha māse kṛṣna pakṣe 5 paṃcama tithau vu maṃgalavāre maghā nakṣatre****-ciḥ-kulanāma jogo || atra kasayāmojavāda vāstave rājādhirāja kaṃha-sāhīkavara karmaṃ caṃda-rājya-pravarttamāne || śrīmūlasaṃghe bhaṭṭāraka śrī padmanaṃdi tat-paṭṭe śubhacaṃdra tat-paṭṭe bha. jiṇacaṃdra tat-paṭṭe bha. prabhācaṃdra maṅ. śrī ratnakīrti tat-śiṣya maṅgalācārya śrī bhuvanakīrti tad-āmnāye khaṃḍelavālānvaye| ajamerā gotre yaṃ sūjū tat-putre ṭehu bhāryā chājītayor putra chītara bhāryā rājā iti dharmaparīkṣā-sākthvaṃ jñānāvarṇī karma kṣayaṃ nimittaṃ likhāya || muni devanaṃdi yogya dātavyaṃ śubham abhavat||*

I have chosen to render the scribal colophon fully when it occurs for the first time in this paper and to write in bold what is translated in this specific section of the paper. In the transcription of the colophons, I have split the words to make them clearer, but I have not corrected any scribal errors. As such, they may contain 'mistakes' against proper Sanskrit language.

[47] For the date of this manuscript, copied in Gwalior, I have followed the *pūrṇimānta* variant of the calendar as it was commonly used in northern India (although not in Gujarat).

[48] It is not surprising that the oldest manuscript is dated four centuries later than the text was composed, as paper manuscripts dated before 1500 are rare, and all dated manuscripts attested in the catalogues are on paper.

Vṛndāvati during the reign of Rāvasūryana […].'[49] Klatt's Jaina-Onomasticon (Klatt 2016), an enormous compilation of references to Jain authors, texts, and other names taken from textual, bibliographical, and epigraphic sources, has just an entry for Vṛndāvatī-nagara (p. 795), and the name is similar to the well-known Vṛndāvan, but further there seems to be no information on this locality that would be linked to the mentioned ruler (*Rāvasūryana*).

Another colophon, of n. 475 in the Jaina Vidyā Saṃsthān containing Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā*, attests to *sahādarā-madhye*.[50] One could guess that this place-name refers to Śāhadarā, which was one of the suburbs of Shāhjahānabād (old Delhi) and was sacked in the disorder of the mid-eighteenth century (Blake 1991, p. 58). This might fit because the same manuscript also refers to the ruling of Mulakagīr, who would have been a ruler of Delhi around the time the manuscript was copied.[51] As the manuscript is nowadays kept in the collection of the Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān in Jaipur, it seems that this particular manuscript traveled (at least) from Delhi to Jaipur. It might have travelled with a *muni* who came from Delhi to Jaipur, or with an educated lay person who possibly had some trade business between the two cities. It is also possible that the manuscript evidences the migration of Jains from formerly Mughal regions (including Delhi) to Jaipur encouraged by Sawai Jai Singh II, who established Jaipur as a flourishing city that attracted Jain merchants as well as Jain scribal elites (see Roy 1978, pp. 55–58, 180–91). Nevertheless, there existed linkages through the religious community between the two cities that are materialized in the manuscript.

A last example of a reference to a place in a colophon comes from the *puṣpikā* of manuscript n. 211 in the Svarn Mandir in Gwalior: 'It was written down in Campābāga.'[52] The place Campābāga can be located with more certainty when combined with the information found in the catalogue describing the manuscript. The catalogue refers to the place of copying as Campābāga, Laśkara. This place is easy to locate because Laśkara is the neighbourhood in Gwalior where the manuscript actually is kept today in the Digambara Svarn Mandir. So, it seems that this particular manuscript has not travelled since its production.

Although it is hard to ascertain the place of copying for many manuscripts, the manuscripts of which the place of copying is known attest to a varied spatial spread in which manuscripts not rarely moved from one place to the other as Jains moved. At the same time, the fact that the manuscripts moved along with the Jains gives a sense of their function and value.

5.2.3. Scribes

A next step in this attempt to retrace the history of *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscript circulation focuses on targeting its audience, by establishing the identity of the scribe, of the patron, and of the recipient of the selected manuscripts. Firstly, some of the collected manuscripts render the name of the scribe of the manuscript. These names are often included at the utter end of the colophon, or sometimes before the lineage of *bhaṭṭārakas* (and other ascetic ranks including *ācāryas*) and/or the family who ordered the manuscript. This is the case for example in the colophon of manuscript 1076/1884–87 at BORI (see above for the full colophon): […] *pravarttate likhitaṃ* ***jyoti śrī gaṇesa budivālā*** *graṃthasaṃkhyā 1341||*

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[49] ***saṃvat 1624 varṣe jeṣṭavadi 11 ravivāre vṛṃdāvati sthāne rāvasūryana rājya*** *pravarttate likhitaṃ jyoti śrī gaṇesa budivālā graṃthasaṃkhyā 1341|| śrīmūlasaṃghe balātkāragaṇe sarasvatīgacche srī kuṃdakuṃdācāryānvaye bhaṭṭāraka śrī padmanaṃdidevās tatpaṭṭe bhaḥśubhacaṃdradevās tatpaṭṭe jinacṃdradevās tat-paṭṭe bha. prabhācaṃdradevās tat-śiṣya maṃḍalācārya śrīdharmacaṃdradevās tat-śiṣya maṃ. lalitakīrti devas tat-śiṣya maṃ. caṃdrakīrtidevās tad-āmnāne| Khaṃḍelavāla pāpaḍī gotre sāṃ mehā tasya bhāryā mārṇakade tayoḥ putra sā gaṅgā bhāryā gāravade tayoḥ putre sāṃjānhā bhāryā jauṇāde tayoḥ putra cināthū dvitiya putra solāṣā bhārya lakhamāde| tritiya putra sāṃ āṣāṃ bhāryā ahaṃkāvade| etā madhye sāṃjālhai sastra dharmaparīkṣā-nāma dadyāt prahva(?) rāyamallaḥ yogya jñāna-dāna śubhaṃ bhavatu||.*

[50] See below for the full colophon. This colophon was transcribed from (Kāslivāl 1950, p. 20).

[51] Premi (2014, p. 12) includes a table of rulers, based on an analysis of *praśastis* (authorial colophons) of Jain manuscripts, in which Mulakagīr is referred to as ruler of Delhi in 1733 VS. It is plausible that this information was taken from the manuscript I am referring to, as this was copied in 1733 VS. Premi does not give a reference for locating this ruler in Delhi.

[52] *bhādravā sukla-pakṣa 10 saṃvat 1909 lakhitaṃ badanajī jhājhārivāsī ṭoḍāhāle|| yādṛsaṃ pustakaṃ dṛṣṭvāḥ tādasaṃ lakhitaṃ mayāḥ yādi śuddham-aśuddhaṃ vāḥ mama doṣo na dīyate||* ***lakhitaṃ caṃpābāga maiṃ*** *jaiṭaiṃ dharmavūdota|| budhi-jana jo bācai paḍhai tākau śivāśukha hotaḥ||.*

śrīmūlasaṃghe balātkāragaṇe sarasvatīgacche srī kuṃdakuṃdācāryānvaye bhaṭṭāraka śrī padmanaṃdidevās tatpaṭṭe bhaḥśubhacaṃdradevās tatpaṭṭe [. . .] Khaṃḍelavāla pāpaḍī gotre sāṃ mehā tasya bhāryā mārṇakade tayoḥ putra sā gaṅgā [. . .]. 'Jyoti Śrī Gaṇesa Budivālā undertook the writing in 1341 verses [. . .].'

Other names of scribes I found in the colophons are paṇḍita Govardhana, Toḍahāla, Rāmacandra, pustaka-paṇḍita Rāmacandra, paṃ. (*paṇḍita*) Haritilaka Gaṇi, and paṇḍita Dayārāma. The names and adjoining titles of these copyists suggest that most of them are lay people. The title *paṇḍita* are here, except for Haritilaka, to be understood in the Digambara sense of the title, namely, as lay followers of *bhaṭṭārakas* (see above). Paṇḍita Dayārāma appears as copyist in several colophons in Kāslivāl's *Praśasti Saṃgraha* (1950) and would have been the scribe of dozens and dozens more manuscripts throughout Rajasthan (Detige 2018, p. 289). Paṇḍita Haritilaka Gaṇi is the exception in this row as he holds two titles, *paṇḍita* referring to the rank that comes after *muni* (i.e., the initial rank of a mendicant), and *gaṇi* the rank that more or less coincides with *paṇḍita*. The fact that he holds these two titles at the same time was not uncommon (Cort 1991, p. 664).

In manuscript n. 475 in the Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān of Amitagati's Dharmaparīkṣā in Jaipur reference, we find the colophon: *samvat 1733 kārtika sudī 2 dine śukravāre śrī pātasāha mulakagīra rājye sahādarā-madhye sā. parasarāma tat putra banārasīdāsa tatputra nirmaladāsa likhāvita* ***lekhaka śvetāmbara rāmacaṇdena*** *likhyataṃ*. This colophon is interesting because the scribe is here explicitly said to be Śvetāmbara. This explicit affiliatory reference, in my opinion, suggests some kind of contrast. Either it could point to the fact that Rāmacandra had a different affiliation than the patron (Nirmaladās), who might have been Digambara. Another possibility is that the scribe was aware of the divergence between his own affiliation and that of the Digambara author Amitagati and wanted to make this explicit. Interestingly, although professional scribes did not necessarily have affiliatory connections to a patron or a text and, moreover, there were literary crossovers between Digambara and Śvetāmbara Jains,[53] this case illustrates that a difference in religious identity was still perceived as important enough to make it explicit.[54]

5.2.4. Patronage

Secondly, the colophons of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscripts testify that the copying of some manuscripts was sponsored by lay patrons. In many cases, the name of the patron is given together with his whole family. This is a common way of rendering in Jain manuscripts. In the abovementioned manuscript 617/1875–76 of BORI, for example, we find after the date is given (see above): '[. . .] In the tradition of Maṅgalācārya Śrī Bhuvanakīrti, in the Ajamera Gotra in the Khandelavāla family *mantrin*[55] Sūjū, his son Ṭehu who has a wife Chājī, their son Chītara who has a wife Rājā, has ordered this *Dharmaparīkṣā* [. . .] to be copied.'[56]

This type of family genealogy found in manuscripts could serve as an interesting source for family histories of Jains when comparing multiple colophons. This specific colophon, on its own, tells us that the *Dharmaparīkṣā* was appreciated and most likely used within the Ajamera Gotra of the Digambara *Mūlasaṅgha Balātkāragaṇa Nāgauraśākhā.* Other manuscripts I have consulted give the names of Lālajī Singh, Duṃgarasī Gaṃgāvāla, Nirmaladāsa, Sādhvī Sulekhā, Shah Nālai, Pāpadivāla Khandelavāla, Śāha Gopāla Lausa Khandelavāla, and Osavāla as patrons of the manuscript.

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[53] The authorship of different *Dharmaparīkṣās* shows how the originally Digambara story was taken up by Śvetāmbara authors.

[54] Mrinal Joshi (Joshi 2009) has examined the position of women in Gujarati Jain communities through inscriptions from the second millennium.

[55] I take *maṃ* for *yaṃ*, the former being "a syllable prefixed to names of the male members of the family [which] stands for *mantrin*, [suggesting] that they were, for several generations, something like political advisors or persons close to the ruling power (unspecified, though)" (Balbir 2017, p. 68).

[56] *[. . .] śrī ratnakīrti tat-śiṣya maṅḍalācārya śrī bhuvanakīrti tad-āmnāye khaṃḍelavālānvaye| ajamerā gotre yaṃ. sūjū tat-putre ṭehu bhāryā chājī tayor putra chītara bhāryā rājā iti Dharmaparīkṣā-sākthvaṃ jñānāvarṇī karma kṣayaṃ nimittaṃ likhāya || muni devanaṃdi yogya dātavyaṃ śubham abhavat||.*

It is interesting to notice that women could also patronize the copy of a text. Sādhvī Sulekhā was a lay woman who patronized the copying of the text by Amitagati (manuscript n. 476 in the Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān).[57] It shows that women had considerable power within the religious realm of life.

5.2.5. Recipient of a Manuscripts

Thirdly, only a couple of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* manuscripts I have consulted mention the person receiving the manuscript. Two manuscripts attest that they were given to a monk, which is in accordance with the expected duty of the laity to support the monastic community by providing manuscripts (Cort 1995, p. 78). One manuscript of Hariṣeṇa's *Dhammaparikkhā* was given to muni Devanandi: *muni devanaṃdi yogya dātavyaṃ* 'it will be given to muni Devanandi' (see above for the complete colophon of BORI 617/1875–76), another was meant for muni Guṇacandra (n. 472 in the Jain Vidyā Saṃsthān). One manuscript of Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā* (BORI 1076/1884–87) seems to have been given to a lay person named Rāyamallaḥ. This, however, remains uncertain because the name Rāyamalla is preceded by a first name or title that is illegible and that I have taken as *prahva* (see above).

The recipient of a manuscript does not always have to be a third person. Manuscript Kh-125 from the Jain Siddhānt Bhavan in Arrah containing Amitagati's *Dharmaparīkṣā*, for example, reads: 'In 1691 VS on the sixth day of the dark fortnight of the month Pauṣa, pustaka-pandit Śrī Rāmacandra has copied it for his own reading.'[58] This illustrates how the *Dharmaparīkṣā* could both serve as an honorable gift for a monk and be used by a lay individual, possibly for his entertainment or to practice his religious commitment.

5.2.6. Other Information

Lastly, I would like to mention two more interesting aspects we can find in the *puṣpikās*. Several manuscripts give the lineage of *bhaṭṭārakas* and *ācārya*s to which the patrons or copyist of the manuscript (for example, in case one had copied the manuscript for his own purpose) are affiliated. These lineages not only reveal the evolution of the different *bhaṭṭāraka* seats, it also tells about the sects (*gacchas*) and traditions or branches (*āmnāya* or *śākhā*) in which this specific text circulated. In comparison to other texts, such approach might reveal whether certain genres or textual traditions were more popular in certain *gacchas*. As there is only a limited number of the consulted manuscripts of *Dharmaparīkṣā* that refer to a specific *gaccha*, such claims are difficult to make within this article.[59] However, one manuscript of Rāmacandra's text (a Digambara author) mentions that it was copied within the *Āgama Gaccha* (BORI 1270/1891–95), which is a Śvetāmbara branch. This, again, illustrates that Śvetāmbara audiences were interested in Digambara literature, in this case, in a Digambara abbreviated narrative (the text has only thirty-three folios, whereas manuscripts of Amitagati's text mostly have over one hundred folios), hypothetically suggesting the usefulness of Rāmacandra's text.[60]

A last interesting aspect we find in the materiality of the manuscript colophons is the appearance of a handwriting different from the rest of the manuscript for the second part of the *puṣpikā* or for

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[57] Sādhvī is here the equivalent of the contemporary name Śāh. Her lay status is clear from the complete colophon: *saṃvat 1599 pauṣa budi 9 śukre dūṣṭikāpathadurgre śrī mūlasaṃghe balātkāragaṇe sarasvatīgacche kuṃdakuṃdācāryānvaye bhaṭṭāraka śrī padmanandidevās tat-paṭṭe bhaṭṭāraka śrī śubhacaṃdradevās tat-paṭṭe bhaṭṭāraka śrī jinacaṃdradevās tad-āmnāye mithyātamadhvāṃta-sūryāḥ parama-seddhāṃtika-maṃḍalācāryaḥ śrī siṃhanandidevās tac-chiṣya vādigaja-keśari-caritra-pātra parama-tapamvī-maṃḍalācāryaḥ śrī dharmakīrtidevāḥ tasyāmnāye sakala-guṇa-samanvita paṃḍita cāryaḥ abhū bhāryā sādhvī lāḍo putra 6 prathama putra paṃ. dīna bhāryā […] dvitiyaḥ putraḥ paṃ. ghāgho tṛtīya-putra paṃ. dhīru bhāryā sādhvī sulekhā caturtha-putra vīru paṃca-putra paṃ. dāse ṣaṣṭa-putra kharagu eteṣāṃ madhye sādhvī sulekhā etat śāstraṃ likhāpitaṃ‖.*

[58] saṃbat 1691 varṣe posavadi ṣaṣṭī tithau |pustaka-paṃḍita-jī śrī rāmacaṃda-jī ātma-paṭhanārthaṃ lipī kṛtā.

[59] The manuscripts with such references were copied within the *Delhi-Jaipur Śākhā* and the *Nāgaur Śākhā* of the Digambara *Sarasvatī Gaccha* (the texts by Amitagati and Hariṣeṇa), and the *Nandītaṭagaccha* of the Digambara *Kāṣṭha Saṃgha* (the text by Amitagati).

[60] Considering the content and function of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* narrative, an abbreviated version of the story might sometimes have been preferred for use in sermons or for one's own reading, in contrast to the lengthy version by Amitagati. Another possibility is that the shorter text gave 'quick access' to the content of Amitagati's authoritative version.

the whole *puṣpikā*. This is the case in several of the abovementioned examples. To repeat just one, in manuscript BORI 1076/1884–87 (see Figure 7), one part of the colophon including the date, place, and scribe of the copy is written in one handwriting, while a second part including the monastic lineage, family of the patron, and the recipient is in another handwriting. The second handwriting is probably a later addition, added to the manuscript to put on paper the patronage of this manuscript by the Khandelavāla Pāpaḍivāla family, or added when the manuscript (that already existed before) was given to *Rāyamallaḥ*.

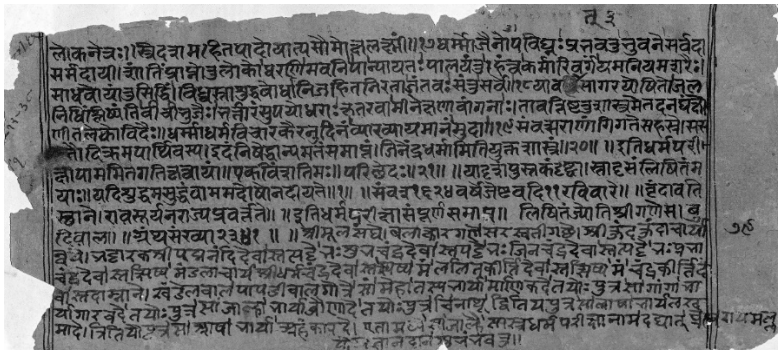

Figure 7. *Dharmaparīkṣā* by Amitagati, BORI 1076/1884–87[61].

This type of evidence shows how the *Dharmaparīkṣā* texts (by Amitagati, but also by Hariṣeṇa and Manohardās) very literally changed hands.

6. Conclusions

The initial observation of multiple versions of *Dharmaparīkṣā*, as well as the considerable number of manuscripts located in geographically diffuse places on the subcontinent, has shown how the *Dharmaparīkṣā* circulated across linguistic and regional boundaries. This indicates the circulation and broader transmission of a specific taste of literature, namely a taste for narrative and satirical literature. As such, this article confirms the preference for narrative literature within the Jain community, as highlighted, for example, by Kragh (2013), but adds a definite feel for satire within this preference. Early modern Jain audiences indeed seem to have been fond of this text that is dedicated to laughing at Brahmins.

The focus on the material aspects and the scribal colophons of some exemplary manuscripts taught us that the *Dharmaparīkṣā* had several interested parties. Sometimes it was used by lay people for their own reading or study, sometimes it was gifted to a muni by lay patrons who outsourced the copying of a manuscript to professional scribes. Moreover, the circulation of the material text was not limited to one affiliation within the Jain community, one manuscript could circulate across sectarian boundaries.

My analysis of the material culture of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* reinforces previous studies on Jain manuscript culture (such as Cort 1995; Kragh 2013; Balbir 2017) from the perspective of one textual tradition. It shows that Jain manuscripts of the Dharmaparīkṣā served as 'meeting places' between literary interested actors of the religious community. These 'meeting places' should not be regarded as fixed. They were both mobile, as they travelled from one geographical place to the other, as well as mobilizing, as they incited people to travel enhancing their socioreligious networks. From this, it is manifest that the material literary circulation of a satirical narrative, which the *Dharmaparīkṣā* is, was unlimited by boundaries and supported by the broader Jain community.

These conclusions from a material point of view raise new questions with regards to the circulation of the *Dharmaparīkṣā* in its different versions, and also with regards to the circulation of similar

[61] Received from BORI.

narratives. In relation to the latter, it would be interesting to look at, for example, the materiality of the *Dhūrtākhyāna* tradition, in comparison to the *Dharmaparīkṣā* tradition, by investigating whether manuscripts of the *Dhūrtākhyāna* tradition were as widely spread, kept in the same places, or circulated within the same affiliatory groups. This would disclose further the popularity of repertoires, genres, and styles within the Jain community.

Research along the line of the different versions of *Dharmaparīkṣā* will lead to further insight into existing or non-existing sectarian divisions, historical contexts of religious conflict, and perceptions of language in India.

Finally, with its method that acknowledges the importance of material culture to the study of literature, this paper hopes to inspire further examinations of the material culture of specific literary texts or traditions, issuing an evaluation of their specific role with regards to popularity, religious authority, or economy.

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